

Message Text

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45

ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 INRE-00 USIE-00

CIAE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01

PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 SAM-01 ACDA-05 IO-11 SCCT-01 /081 W

----- 001418

O 131540Z MAR 76

FM AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 9003

INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY ATHENS

USINT BAGHDAD

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY KUWAIT

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

DIA WASHDC IMMEDIATE

USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GER

C O N F I D E N T I A L BEIRUT 2283

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINS, PINT, MILI, LE

SUBJ: LINES HARDENING IN LEBANESE POWER STRUGGLE

1. UNOFFICIAL MEETING OF DEPUTIES AT PARLIAMENT MORNING
MARCH 13 DELEGATED SPEAKER KAMEL AL-ASSAD TO CALL ON PRES.
FRANGIE TO URGE HIM TO RESIGN. SPEAKER WENT TO PALACE MID-DAY.
ACCORDING TO ONE SOURCE, ASSAD CARRIED PETITION SIGNED BY
44 DEPUTIES REQUESTING RESIGNATION. WE UNDERSTAND MEETING GOT NO-
WHERE, AS FRANGIE TOOK EXTREMELY HARD LINE. PRESIDENT APPARENTLY
REFUSING TO ACCEPT ANY FACE-SAVING FORMULA AND MAY EVEN BE BACKING
AWAY FROM IDEA THAT HE WOULD YIELD TO TWO-THIRDS VOTE OF
PARLIAMENT.

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2. AS OF 1630 HOURS LOCAL MARCH 13, SPEAKER AGAIN CLOSETED WITH OTHER DEPUTIES AT PARLIAMENT TO DETERMINE NEXT ACTION. DEPUTIES ARE TRYING GET MORE SIGNATURES ON PETITION. (SIXTY-SIX NAMES NEEDED TO REACH TWO-THIRDS OF HOUSE.)

3. MEANWHILE AN OFFICER LOYAL TO FRANGIE, COL. ANTOINE BARAKAT, HAS TAKEN OVER LARGE BARRACKS NEAR PALACE AND HAS APPEALED TO OTHER OFFICERS TO SUPPORT "LEGALITY". LATE WORD IS THAT SARBA CASERNE AT JOUNIEH (THE BARRACKS INVOLVED IN RECENT AKKAR INCIDENT) HAS JOINED BARAKAT.

4. ONE SOURCE TELLS US THAT CHAMOUN'S NATIONAL LIBERAL MILITIA HELPED BARAKAT GET CONTROL OF BARRACKS NEAR PALACE. IF TRUE, CHAMOUN MAY BE UP TO DOUBLE GAME HE HAS PLAYED BEFORE, FOR MOST RECENT REPORTS HAVE SHOWN HIM ACCEPTING NECESSITY THAT FRANGIE RESIGN.

5. THERE IS UNCONFIRMED REPORT THAT JORDANIAN AMBASSADOR WAS KIDNAPPED FROM HIS CAR MARCH 13 NEAR CHIYAH QUARTER IN BEIRUT SUBURBS.
LAMBRAKIS

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NNN

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